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OVERYOU

K-STATE LOOKS TO JUMP OU IN THE BIG 12 STANDINGS

Jed Barker | Collegian
K-State sophomore quarterback Daniel Sams leaps over TCU strong safety Derrick Kindred to get the first down at Bill Snyder Family Stadium on November 16, 2013.

K-State looks to hand Stoops first loss ever in Manhattan

Brandon Painter
staff writer

With a victory against K-State this Saturday, Oklahoma head coach Bob Stoops would become the winningest in the Sooners' storied program. It would be win No. 158, and with it Stoops would pass Barry Switzer, an Oklahoma legend. Ironically enough, Stoops spent his first year as a full-time coach with K-State. From 1989 to 1995, Stoops served as defensive backs coach and later as co-defensive coordinator under head coach Bill Snyder.

The Sooners have amassed a pretty impressive season to date. At 8-2, their only losses came at the hands of Baylor, when the undefeated Bears beat them 41-12, and the Texas Longhorns back in Week 6, 36-20. The Wildcats fell to the Longhorns in their conference opener as well.

Stoops downgraded the importance of this weekend's game.

"Winning there would be great for our season and this season for all of those reasons," Stoops said to Tulsa's Channel 8 news respondent John Laws. "Outside of that, Coach Snyder and I aren't going to play. We have got teams and staff and a bunch of people working with us and it will be one team against the other."

Historically, the Sooners have the edge. Stoops possesses a 7-2 record in matchups with the Wildcats, including 4-0 in Manhattan. The K-State defense, who seem to have finally overcome the jitters in these past four weeks, need to step their game up against the rush. Last week against TCU, the Wildcats held the Horned Frogs to 111 rushing yards while the Sooners put up huge numbers against Iowa State. On just 44 attempts, Oklahoma tallied an incredible 405 yards and four touchdowns on the ground. At one point during the second half, the Sooners had three snaps account for 204 yards.

"They have three tremendous running backs and you have to add the quarterback to that," Snyder said at his weekly press conference. "They are all very fine athletes. The defining factor in addition to that is they have five returning offensive line starters that are all big, physical, athletic guys. They do a nice job up front to make some of those things happen."

However, putting up those kinds of numbers is going to be difficult. In their last six games, the Wildcats have held their opponents to less than 125 net rushing yards. This includes the filthy four-running back nuclear arsenal of the Baylor Bears. Baylor ran 57 times for 340 yards and five touchdowns in its game last week against Texas Tech. K-State held the Bears to 145 yards on 37 attempts.

An area of concern for Oklahoma: starting quarterback Blake Bell left last week's contest in the second quar-



Sophomore quarterback **Daniel Sams** looks to throw against TCU at Bill Snyder Family Stadium last Saturday.

ter with an injury and will not play Saturday. However, backup Trevor Knight stepped in and stepped up against the Cyclones. Knight filled Bell's shoes fully, completing 8-of-14 pass attempts for 61 yards and a staggering 123 yards on the ground, including a touchdown, on just 10 carries.

With Knight illustrating that

he is more than capable, and a third quarterback who is waiting anxiously for his time on the field, K-State could see a two-quarterback attack on Saturday.

"The good thing is you can only get one on the field at a time," Snyder said. "I say that with reservation that you could potentially see two. We have

always known Bell to be a guy that can run the football. They put in the youngster last week, and he ran the football so very well. He had one of those long-yardage plays for a touchdown. They are all good."

Another piece to the puzzle? Oklahoma's special teams. Senior wide receiver Jalen Saunders was named Big 12's

Co-Special Teams Player of the Week last Monday alongside K-State kicker Jack Cantele. With Iowa State leading 10-3 in the second quarter, Saunders outmaneuvered Cyclone defenders into the end zone on a 91-yard punt return. After that score, the Sooners went on to score 38 straight, destroying the Cyclones' hope of snapping

a 15-game losing streak to the Sooners.

The game this weekend will be a strong component of bowl placement. With Texas Tech and K-State nipping at each other's heels, and Oklahoma struggling to maintain their position, wins and losses this weekend could weigh heavily on this year's bowl season.

Jed Barker | Collegian

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Sooners bring strong rushing attack to Little Apple



Jacqueline Eby | OU Daily

Oklahoma redshirt freshman quarterback **Trevor Knight** runs into the in zone last weekend against Iowa State in Norman, Okla. The Sooners beat the Cyclones 48-10.

Spencer Low
staff writer

Dominance is nothing new to the Oklahoma Sooners. They have been winning conference championships since the early days of the program, their first coming in 1915 as a member of the now-dissolved Southwest Conference. Since then, they have spent the last 75 years dominating the Big 6, 7, 8, and now the Big 12, with 41 of their 44 conference championships in that span, including last year's shared title with K-State.

The Sooners are led by Bob Stoops, who is just one win away from becoming the all-time winningest coach in Oklahoma history. Sitting at 157 wins, there's no doubt he'd love to capture number 158 against his former mentor Bill Snyder in Manhattan.

The Sooners strength is in their running game and defense. Think Stoops learned something from

Snyder?

The Sooners rank second in rushing offense in the Big 12 and 17th nationally with 236.4 yards per game, which is good for them, because their passing offense is ahead of only Kansas in the conference rankings, putting up 187.6 yards per game.

Their running game is a multi-pronged attack, led primarily by senior running backs Brennan Clay and Damien Williams.

Clay, a top recruit out of high school, is having his best season as a Sooner, with 643 yards on 103 attempts for an impressive 6.2 yards per carry and four touchdowns.

Clay's battery mate Williams is second on the team with 553 yards this season and seven touchdowns. While not as gaudy as Clay's mark, William has averaged 4.9 yards per rush, a solid number. However, Williams will not play Saturday.

Senior Roy Finch, who came in along with Clay as a highly touted recruit, has seen action in all 10

games, but has half the carries of his two running mates. Nonetheless, he has capitalized on his opportunities, averaging 6.3 yards per carry for 326 yards this season.

As for the quarterback situation, starter Blake Bell was injured last week and will not play, opening the door for backup Trevor Knight. Although Knight has been ineffective of late, like Bell, he can be a threat on the ground. Knight is fourth on the team with 309 yards rushing, while Bell has 255 and is a force in short-yardage situations.

Stopping this running game has been a common thread for teams that want to hang with the Sooners. Their two losses on the season produced their two lowest totals for rushing yards: 131 against Texas and just 87 against Baylor. Another important factor in those losses is that both came away from home.

At home this season, Oklahoma is averaging 283.3 yards per game, but the number is just over 166 when

playing games in cities not named Norman, Okla. If they want to win, they will need to find a way to get their running game going in the face of a hostile crowd in search of a big win before heading home for some turkey.

Maybe the biggest reason Oklahoma has been able to run their way to victories is their defense. The Sooners are 13th in the nation in total defense and especially stingy against the pass, allowing just 182.8 yards per game through the air, placing them 10th in the nation.

While they have dealt with some unfortunate injuries this year, especially to linebacker Corey Nelson, they have shown surprising depth, shown by Dominique Alexander, Nelson's replacement. The freshman has racked up 52 tackles in his five starts since Nelson's injury, serving an important role next to team tackles leader Frank Shannon in the linebacker corps.

Oklahoma uses their defense

to shut down opposing offenses, taking leads into the locker room at halftime and relying on the running game to seal wins.

The Sooners have only been behind twice at end of the first half all season, and both of those games ended in a loss for Oklahoma.

Early offense has been hard to come by for Oklahoma. The Sooners are being outscored 52-33 this season in the first quarter, and have not put any points on the board in the first frame in their last four games. Reversely, they have dominated the second quarter, outscoring opponents 111-50. To beat Oklahoma, K-State must not only grab an early lead, but hold on to that lead in the second quarter, which is a huge challenge.

Oklahoma has lost just two games this season: away games to very good teams who stopped their running game. If they find a way to get their running game going early, then they are a very hard team to stop.



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HEAD2HEAD

SPORTS EDITOR: JOHN ZETMEIR
GUEST CORRESPONDENT: JULIA NELSON, SPORTS EDITOR OU DAILY



John Zetmeir

K-State has not beaten the Oklahoma Sooners in Manhattan in 17 years. However, this should be the year that the streak is snapped. The Sooners are clearly not the same team that they've been in previous years where they have been recognized as the top team in the Big 12. On the other end of the spectrum, the Wildcats have won four straight games behind an offense that appears to get better every week. In the Sooners two losses this season, they've allowed teams to torch them on the ground. This gives the advantage to K-State. Guys like Daniel Sams and John Hubert could be a nightmare for this struggling Sooner defense.

The Sooner defense may be young, but it is a bright spot for Oklahoma this season. It's been crippled with injuries, but young talent has stepped up in the place of veteran leaders. Freshman linebacker Dominique Alexander is second on the team for tackles with 62. Sophomore linebacker Frank Shannon leads the team with 76. After defensive coordinator Mike Stoops essentially eliminated the linebacker position last season, it's nice to see the position being brought back to relevance. It all falls on the Sooner offense to win this game, though. Coach Bob Stoops will not announce who will start before the game, but I expect Trevor Knight to reclaim his starting position. If he can effectively run the read-option, establish a hint of a passing game and open up things on the ground, Kansas State will be in trouble. OU's defense played lights out against Baylor, but couldn't keep it going because it was on the field far too much. Daniel Sams and Jake Waters struggled during the beginning of the season trying to find their roles in the Wildcat offense. If the Oklahoma defense gets the support it needs from the offense, Oklahoma should walk away with the win.



Julia Nelson



John Zetmeir

If Trevor Knight is named the starter, that has to give K-State the advantage. Bill Snyder Family Stadium is not an easy place to play, and for an inexperienced guy like Knight, the atmosphere may be too much. The only Big 12 games that Knight has played significant time in were Iowa State and West Virginia, two teams who won't be playing in bowl games. Stoops tried to use Knight against Baylor but he couldn't get much going against the Bears. If we are ranking the running abilities of these quarterbacks, Sams has proven to be more lethal. Sams torched Baylor's defense, running for 199 yards. If that Sooner defense can't find a way to neutralize the talented sophomore, he could have a career day.

Trevor Knight is unproven, but Bell has proved himself to be unreliable. The offense that co-offensive coordinator Josh Heupel tries to run with Bell under center is the poor man's version of what he ran with Sam Bradford and Landry Jones. With Knight, OU runs the read-option — what they practiced all summer. He's grown since the beginning of the season, just as any player would. Kendal Thompson is another option — one who seems to have a vertical passing attack. But playing Thompson in his first start this late in the season seems like the coaches would be throwing him to the wolves, no matter how big his upside is.



Julia Nelson



John Zetmeir

The Sooners possess a stable of talented running backs, but that stable just lost one of its top horses for this game. With the news that Damien Williams will not play on Saturday, Oklahoma loses some of their versatility in the running game. This should benefit the K-State defense. Last season, K-State became the first ranked team in the Stoops era to win in Norman. With guys like Hubert, Mueller and Walker back who know what it feels like to beat the Sooners, confidence will be high. In the last 10 years, K-State has beaten the Sooners twice. In both of those games, Oklahoma was held to under 20 points. If K-State's young defense can limit the Sooners, K-State should walk away with a victory.

That theory works well, but you forget that OU has three other capable running backs on the roster. Seniors Brennan Clay and Roy Finch are more than capable of carrying the weight of the run game. Throw in freshman Keith Ford, and Oklahoma won't even notice that Damien Williams isn't on the field. The last time Oklahoma went on the road without Williams, Clay rushed for 157 yards. The Sooners just had their first game with over 400 rush yards in the Stoops era. Kansas State allowed over 200 yards on the ground against North Dakota State earlier this season. It may have improved over time, but with the momentum already coming in on the ground game, the Kansas State defense is about to crumble.



Julia Nelson

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Comparing Positions: Sooners, Wildcats even matchup



Junior defensive back **Randall Evans** breaks up a pass intended for TCU junior wide receiver **Brandon Carter** last Saturday at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.

Taylor Alderman | Collegian

Tate Steinlage
staff writer

QB Trevor Knight vs. QB Jake Waters

Freshman quarterback Trevor Knight has been the up and down promise of the Oklahoma Sooners so far this year. The opening day starter for the team, Knight's stint as the starter lasted just two games before junior quarterback Blake Bell took over and threw for over 400 yards against Tulsa.

However, Bell was knocked out of last week's matchup against the Iowa State Cyclones, and Knight came in and impressed with a 93.7 quarterback rating and a touchdown on the ground. The freshman has already seen action this year, so the big stage shouldn't overwhelm him, but that doesn't mean he'll be comfortable in front of 52,000-plus for his first road start as an Oklahoma quarterback.

K-State junior quarterback Jake Waters, on the other hand, had to overcome some early season woes to find his footing at quarterback. However, since Oct. 12's loss against the Baylor Bears, Waters has thrown for 654 yards and six touchdowns, while rushing for two more on the ground in four-straight Wildcat victories.

Verdict: Barring the chance that Knight struggles and Bell is cleared and able to man the offense, Waters has the significant edge both through the air and on the ground, including the momentum to carry both throughout Saturday's contest.

RB Brennan Clay vs. RB John Hubert

Running back Brennan Clay began his senior campaign this year in full force for Bob Stoops' ball club. He was getting the grunt of the rushing attack, tallying over 75 yards three times in Oklahoma's first five games, including a 170-yard season best against West Virginia on Sept. 7.

However, since Oct. 5 Clay has been in the background behind senior back Damien Williams. Clay will get his chance Saturday, though, as Oklahoma announced this week that Williams will be suspended for the K-State game.

With Knight reportedly the starter for Oklahoma when they take the field at Bill Snyder Family Stadium, expect Clay to get a nice workload at running back to aid the freshman quarterback's decision making.

K-State senior running back John Hubert was cruising through Big 12 play after getting off to a shaky start this year. However, last Saturday the TCU Horned Frogs packed the box to stop the K-State ground game and were successful as Hubert only gained 25 yards on the ground.

Unfortunately for Hubert, Oklahoma will likely do much of the same, especially with the threat quarterbacks Daniel Sams and Jake Waters bring with their feet. I don't expect Hubert to be as quiet as he was last year, especially if K-State can open up the Oklahoma Sooners secondary, but Hubert may have a tough time rushing past seven or eight defenders inside the box.

Verdict: Hubert has been the more consistent rusher this year, but the Sooners won't want to see him get going on the ground. The edge has to go to Clay, who will have to lead the Oklahoma rushing attack with a lot of carries due to Williams' suspension.

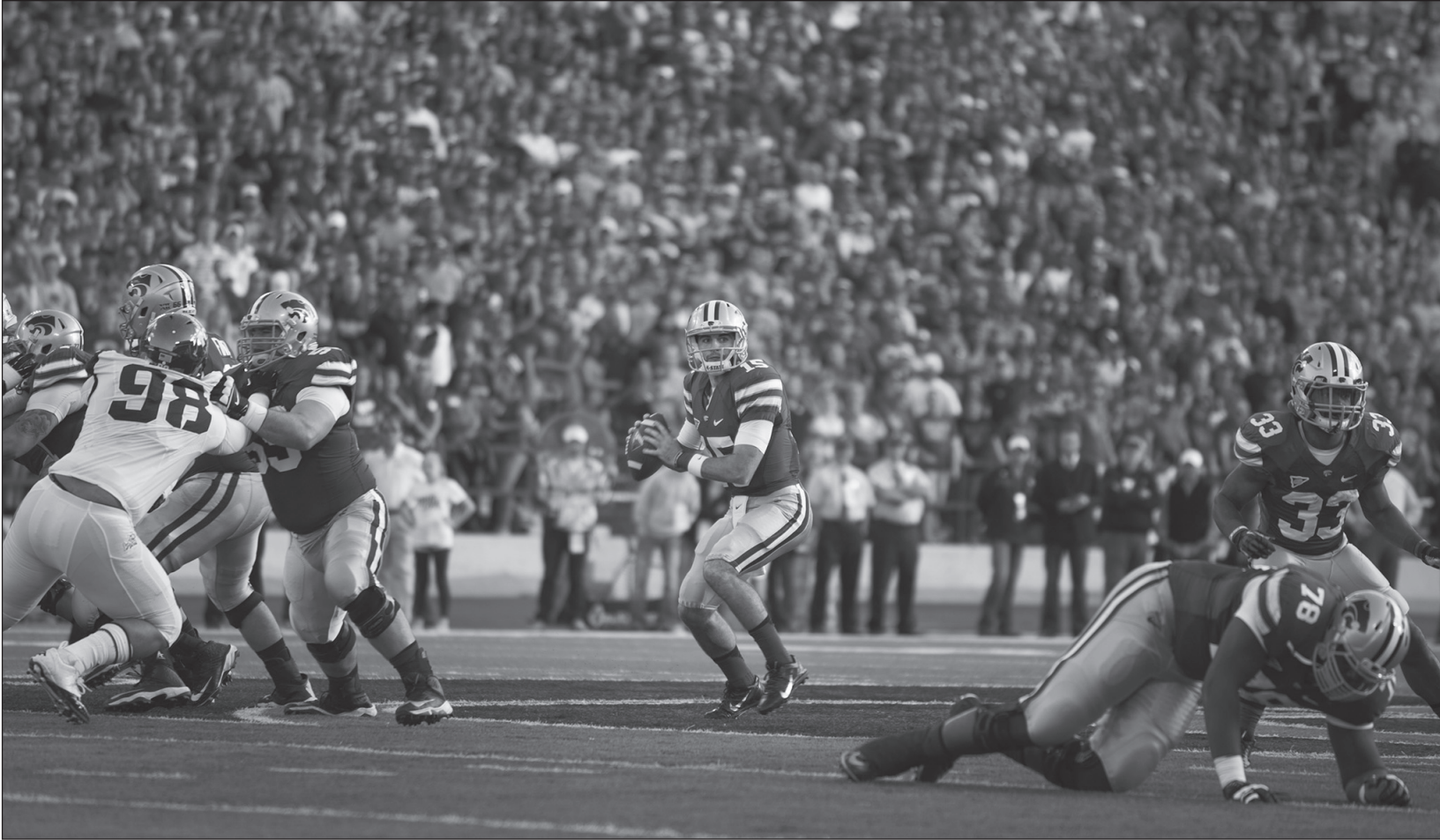
DB Quentin Hayes vs. DB Randall Evans
Junior defensive back

Quentin Hayes has been a stat stuffer for Oklahoma this year. 58 tackles, four for loss, a sack, an interception, and two forced fumbles highlight an impressive year for the junior, and certainly compliments Oklahoma's 8-2 record. If the Sooners try to pack the box like TCU did last week, expect K-State to look to throw the ball, which will give Hayes a chance to showcase his talents.

Junior Randall Evans, too, has been at the forefront of this resurgent K-State defense.

Like Hayes, Evans has filled the stat column, notching 54 tackles, two for loss, a sack, an interception and seven batted passes. Expect another solid performance from Evans, who started in last year's Wildcat victory in Norman.

Verdict: Too close to call. Their stats are nearly identical, and where one player has the edge, the other has one elsewhere. Both are having fantastic seasons and have the experience to make an impact on Saturday, and I wouldn't be surprised if both do.



Junior quarterback **Jake Waters** looks to pass down field last Saturday at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.

Taylor Alderman | Collegian

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HEAD 2 HEAD



Loss to Oklahoma would likely send K-State to Texas Bowl



Austin Earl

With a win over the TCU Horned Frogs, the K-State Wildcats became bowl eligible for the fourth straight season. After a 2-4 start, it's nice for fans to worry about their travel plans rather than if the Wildcats will play in a bowl at all.

With a loss on Saturday to No. 20 Oklahoma, all indications are that K-State will head to the Texas Bowl. The Texas Bowl is scheduled for Dec. 27 in Houston, Texas.

The Texas Bowl gets the fifth selection from both the Big 12 and Big 10. Bowls are not bound by conference standings, and are allowed to pick whichever team fits their bowl the best. With a loss, K-State will finish fifth in the Big 12. With all four schools ahead of K-State having prestigious programs, they will be taken by bowls that have an earlier selection than the Texas

Bowl.

ESPN projects the No. 25 Minnesota Golden Gophers to be the other participant in the Texas Bowl. Minnesota has had a very good season, and they currently sit at 8-2. They have two very tough games left against ranked teams.

Minnesota's head coach, Jerry Kill, a Cheney, Kan. native, has had his own off-the-field problems this year. He suffers from epilepsy, which has caused him to miss games and coach from the press box. Kill has done a great job of keeping his team together through his personal struggles. He said he will not return to the sideline this season because his team has taken off with him in the press box.

K-State could still face another team, of course. The Nebraska Cornhuskers and Michigan Wolverines are the other teams that have the best shot at playing in Houston.

Michigan is a turnover prone team, but still can put a lot of points on the board. They have struggled in recent weeks with their offense, scoring just 46 points in their last three games.

Nebraska is a good team that is very young. They have un-

dergone a quarterback change this year. Senior Taylor Martinez is injured and out for the year, leaving the reigns to freshman Tommy Armstrong Jr. Having a freshman at quarterback leads to a streaky offense. This would be an exceptionally fun game as two former Big 12 rival teams would clash.

No matter who K-State plays, it should be an even match-up. That's the beauty of bowl season. National exposure and extra practice time are the biggest incentive when it comes to bowls. Playing a prestigious team would be great for the Wildcats, as it could mean higher TV ratings for the game.

K-State has played in the Texas Bowl before. In 2006, the Wildcats faced the Rutgers Scarlet Knights and lost 37-10. That game was a part of the five-game bowl losing streak that K-State currently finds itself in. The last time they won a bowl game was in 2002 against Arizona State in the Holiday Bowl. The Wildcats will look to end that streak in the Texas Bowl this winter.

Austin Earl is a freshman in pre-journalism. Please send comments to sports@kstatecollegian.com.

Win over Oklahoma could propel Wildcats back to Arizona



John Zetmeir

The K-State Wildcats have played in a top Big 12 bowl each of the past two seasons. Last season, the Wildcats found themselves in the Fiesta Bowl after capturing the Big 12 title and the year before that, K-State played in the Cotton Bowl after a 10-2 season. These are recognized as the top two bowls that have Big 12 tie-ins.

The Wildcats are now bowl eligible and even though both the Fiesta and Cotton bowls are off the table, the Wildcats could still play in a top four Big 12 bowl.

With Baylor still in the hunt to play for a national title, the Wildcats could benefit from the Bears' success. If Baylor found themselves playing for a national title, the Big 12 would likely put two teams in the BCS. This would

shift every other team up one bowl game. If the Wildcats can win their final two games, they could finish in the top four in the Big 12.

At that point, possible destinations would be the Alamo Bowl, reserved for the third place team in the Big 12 standings, or the Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl that is reserved for the team that finishes fourth.

Both of those would be considered respectable bowl games for any team, especially one that started the season 2-4. In the Alamo Bowl, K-State would play the second place finisher in the Pac-12 standings, barring a trip to the BCS. The Wildcats could face anyone from the Oregon Ducks to the USC Trojans if they made it to San Antonio for the Alamo Bowl.

K-State could return to Arizona if they were selected to play in the Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl, where they would face a top-five team from the Big 10. This could be one of the most intriguing match ups for K-State due to the possibility of playing formal conference rival Ne-

braska. The Cornhuskers are currently in fifth place in the Big 10 and would be a very attractive suitor for the BWV Bowl. The last time these two teams met was in 2010 when Nebraska embarrassed the Wildcats on a Thursday night in Bill Snyder Family Stadium. I'm sure Snyder would appreciate another crack at a team that always gave him fits when he first started his career as head coach of the Wildcats.

For the Wildcats to make it to the BWV or Alamo Bowl, they would have to win their final two regular season games against Oklahoma and Kansas. On top of that, they would need to root on the Baylor Bears and hope that Art Briles can get his team into the BCS National Championship Game. I'm predicting that the Wildcats will knock off the Oklahoma Sooners and the Kansas Jayhawks, returning to Arizona for the Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl.

John Zetmeir is a junior in mass communications. Please send comments to sports@kstatecollegian.com.

LETTER TO STUDENTS

Senior Wildcats thank student body, fans for memorable career

Dear Fellow K-State Students,

As we are sure you are aware, the 2013 Football Senior class is preparing for our final home game at Bill Snyder Family Stadium. While our time

representing Kansas State University on the field is coming to a close, we are fortunate to have had the opportunity to create some life lasting memories playing for the Wildcats. The environment created by the student section Wabashing,

wearing purple, and being obnoxiously loud gives us an edge over our opponent each week. The atmosphere is electric and second to none in the Big 12. The Oklahoma Sooners will be coming to town Saturday and we will be looking to close out

our regular season play the Wildcat way. We encourage you to fill the student section one last time this fall. For our last home game as seniors we are asking that ALL students and Wildcat fans come out in full support of the Cats on Sat-

urday! With your help we can finish the 2013 season strong. You can help bring us one step closer to another Wildcat victory. Your enthusiasm has been crucial this season, and the K-State Family has truly created some magical memories that

we will cherish for a lifetime. Let's do this together; come early, wear purple, get loud, and Wabash! See you Saturday! Go Cats!

-K-State Football seniors

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Jonathon Coleman	5	DEFENSIVE BACK
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Kip Daily	7	DEFENSIVE BACK
Alauna Finau	94	DEFENSIVE END
Ethan Hammes	48	PUNTER
John Hubert	33	RUNNING BACK
Andre Jackson	87	TIGHT END
Stephen Johnson	2	WIDE RECEIVER
Mark Krause II	38	PUNTER
Evan Loomis	9	WIDE RECEIVER
Cornelius Lucas	78	OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Andre McDonald	18	TIGHT END

Carl Miles, Jr.	2	DEFENSIVE BACK
Torell Miller	88	WIDE RECEIVER
Chaquil Reed	98	DEFENSIVE LINEMAN
Tavon Rooks	73	OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Robert Rose	5	RUNNING BACK
Blake Slaughter	53	LINE BACKER
Logan Stephens	83	WIDE RECEIVER
Kennan Taylor	79	OFFENSIVE LINEMAN
Tramaine Thompson	86	WIDE RECEIVER
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Keys to the game: K-State can't get complacent

Nicolas Wahl
staff writer

K-State Make Oklahoma one-dimensional

Through seven Big 12 games the K-State rushing defense is tops in the conference, allowing just 122.1 yards per contest. That said, the Sooners possess a potent rushing attack. OU is second in the Big 12, averaging over 235 rushing yards per game at 5.5 yards per carry in conference games, trailing only high-powered Baylor.

It's classic strength on strength, but with the Sooners' lack of a passing attack — OU is next to last in the Big 12 at 157 yards passing per game — the impetus is on the Wildcats to stymie their stable of running backs, as well the Sooners' mobile quarterbacks; Blake Bell and Trevor Knight.

The Wildcats understand the challenge ahead, even with the absence of Sooner running back Damien Williams, who is out serving a suspension.

"Offensively, they have a great offensive line that blocks great for their running backs, and their running backs run great," junior linebacker Jonathan Truman said. "They have two quarterbacks who both have the capabilities to make big plays. We just have to be prepared for that."

With the forecast looking blustery for the 11 a.m. kickoff, Oklahoma's passing game could be even more hampered. Shutting down the run early could secure a lead, forcing the Sooners into obvious passing situations, forcing Bell and Knight out of their comfort zone. The Sooners aren't built to come back, and with a touchdown-to-interception ration of just 1.1-to-1 in Big 12 games, they could be ripe for the picking if forced to air it out.

Remember what got you here

After K-State's Oct. 12 loss to Baylor head coach Bill Snyder challenged his team. What were they going to be, a team that folded from the early adversity, or a team that took advantage of the chance to be the first Big 12 program to rebound from an 0-3 start and run the table?

The answer, so far, has been profound.

"We're not getting complacent," sophomore quarterback Daniel Sams said. "I can still see that we want to grow. Each week is a new opponent and a new approach. We have been doing our thing."

In the time since, K-State has cleaned up the penalties, reversed the turnover margin, and found ran its two-quarterback system efficiently. With perennial power Oklahoma attempting a land rush on Manhattan, there should be no excuse for Wildcat complacency.

Oklahoma Control the clock and get the momentum early

There is no doubt that Bill Snyder Family Stadium will be at a frenzied pitch on Senior Day. The Sooners can hush the noise



Taylor Alderman | Collegian

Junior wide receiver **Tyler Lockett** gets tripped up by TCU senior cornerback **Jason Verrett** last Saturday at Bill Snyder Family Stadium.

by pounding the ball and keeping it out of K-State's hands from the start.

"I think it is going to be extremely important to run the ball, control the clock and run it out to get first downs," said Oklahoma running back, and leading rusher, Brennan Clay. "Kansas State does a great job of running the ball, as well, so it's going to a battle up front from both sides of the ball."

It's already been mentioned, but the Sooners running game will be paramount for them. In their five Big 12 wins Oklahoma has averaged nearly 280 rushing yards per game, including last week's 405-yard performance in a blowout win over Iowa State.

But in their two conference losses, the Sooners rushed for just 130 and 87 yards against Texas and Baylor respectively. The Sooners will have to keep the chains moving, get the crowd out of the game, and wear down a K-State defense that's recently been depleted with injuries, including that of run-stopping All-Big 12 safety Ty Zimmerman.

Render K-State special teams regular

On what could be a day of difficult sledding for both offenses due to wintry weather, field position looks to be of utmost importance. It's no secret that the Wildcats possess two of the most dangerous return men in the game in Tyler Lockett and Tra-



Jed Barker | Collegian

Junior defensive end **Ryan Mueller** tries to push past the TCU linebackers during the game against the Horned Frogs at Bill Snyder Family Stadium last Saturday.

mainie Thompson.

Though both men were hampered and missed games earlier in the season, and the numbers aren't where they've usually been Lockett — who has 4 career return touchdowns — is still averaging over 23 yards a kick return in 2013. Thompson does have a kick

return touchdown this season to go along with his 25.7-yard average on punt returns.

Thompson returned a punt 34 yards to set the Cats up at the TCU 44-yard line late in the game last week to help secure the Wildcats' dramatic win.

Jalen Saunders may provide a

spark for the Sooners. The sophomore is second in the Big 12 among qualifying punt returners (13.2 ypr) including a 91-yard touchdown last week against Iowa State that helped earn him Co-Big 12 Special Teams Player of the Week honors with K-State kicker Jack Cantele.

Heisman Watch: Winston still playing strong despite ongoing investigation

Corbin McGuire
staff writer

As the college football season nears an end, the room for error narrows for potential Heisman candidates. One off game, even in a win, can cost a player dearly in a year with four remaining undefeated BCS conference schools from different conferences. If only the playoff was this year. Throw in the Johnny 'Football' factor, and this should make out to be one of the more interesting Heisman finishes in a while.

1. Jameis Winston (QB, Florida State) – Think the news of being investigated for an alleged sexual assault last December would throw off the freshman Heisman front-runner? Not even a little bit. Winston connected on 19 of 21 pass attempts for 277 yards against Syracuse to coast to a 59-3 win. As it stands, the No. 2 Seminoles and Winston sit

just three very winnable games – Idaho, Florida and the ACC Championship game – from a BCS National Championship bid. Right now Duke leads the Coastal division with two road games to play, while Georgia Tech, Virginia Tech, North Carolina and Miami (FL) all sit with three conference losses. The Seminoles haven't played any of those teams, but considering they haven't won a game by less than 14-points all season — including a 37-point drubbing of then-No. 3 Clemson — they don't pose a huge threat. Hitting the 13-0 mark almost guarantees Winston a plane ticket to New York for the Dec. 14 Heisman presentation. The rest depends on the remaining Heisman finalists and how the voters value statistics, winning, and strength of schedule.

2. Bryce Petty (QB, Baylor) – Petty won't have to worry about lacking the statistical

"wow" factor. The Bears will continue to score from first to last whistle to climb up the BCS standings, currently behind undefeated Ohio State, Florida State and Alabama. The Bears need at least one, probably two, of the teams ahead of them to lose to sneak in the BCS National Championship game. The good news for Petty is, he's been able to guide an untamed offense to new heights – averaging an NCAA best 61.2 points per game and 684.8 yards per game. Of those, Petty accounts for 346.6 yards per game, sixth best in the NCAA. His latest outing included an early comeback turned into a 63-34 blowout of Texas Tech. After falling down 20-7 in the first quarter, Petty and the Bears took off. When it was over, Petty had thrown for 335 yards and three touchdowns, running for two more in the third quarter. Facing his biggest test as a Bear this weekend against No. 10 Oklahoma State in Stillwater,

Okla., Petty can really make a case to be on Jameis Winston's Heisman level.

3. Johnny Manziel (QB, Texas A&M) – A part of me still believes Mr. Johnny "Football" has an outside shot at repeating as the Heisman Trophy winner. It's a small part, but it's still there. He's averaging 392.4 yards per game, second best in the NCAA. He holds a 186.9 passer efficiency, third best in the NCAA, and he leads the NCAA in points responsible for with 234. How did Manziel steal the show last year to win the Heisman? Stacked stats early and a standout win late in the regular season – apparently he needed

to play Alabama in November this year. With the loss to the Tide far behind the Aggies, and another loss to Auburn looking less damaging on Manziel's resume each week, the sophomore has two chances to defend his Heisman. Manziel's first chance comes Saturday against No. 22 LSU in Baton Rouge, La. The second and final opportunity for Manziel, as the Aggies are out of the race in the SEC West, is on the road against No. 8 Missouri.

4. A.J. McCarron (QB, Alabama) – After an impressive showing against rival LSU, completing 70 percent of his passes for three touchdowns and no interceptions

in a 21-point win, McCarron followed it up with a less than stellar performance. Sure, No. 1 Alabama beat Mississippi State 20-7 to remain undefeated and keep their three-peat hopes alive. But McCarron looked more like a freshman than a Heisman candidate. McCarron completed 56 percent of his passes, throwing two touchdowns and also two interceptions. McCarron can erase the sloppy win with a tune-up game against Chattanooga Saturday to prepare for the biggest Iron Bowl since Cam Newton graced NCAA fields. Not to mention the Tide's regular season finale against No. 6 Auburn is on the road, with the winner advancing to the SEC Championship game.

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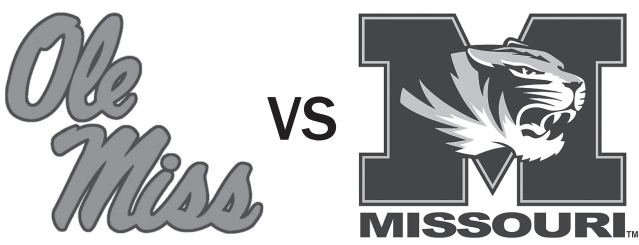
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Games of the Week: Aggies head into Death Valley

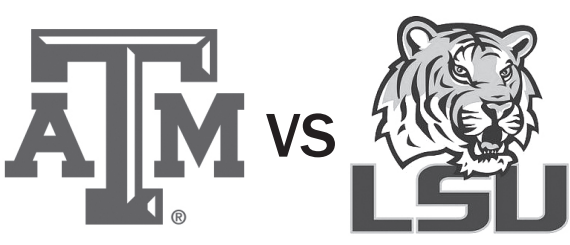


No. 24 Ole Miss vs. No. 8 Missouri
6:45 p.m. CDT, ESPN

The idea is simple for the Tigers. Win out, and they'll likely face Alabama in the SEC Championship Game. If they lose, South Carolina will slip ahead as the leader in the SEC East. The Tigers will face two ranked teams to close the season with the first being the Rebels on Saturday.

The Tigers will get a great end-of-the-season present in quarterback James Franklin. The senior signal-caller has sat out the last four games, but will return as the starter by replacing freshman Maty Mauk. If Missouri wants to contend nationally, it'll need continued production from wide receiver Dorial Green-Beckham. The sophomore has re-emerged as a threat after a disappointing freshman campaign.

At the outset of the season, Ole Miss was regarded as one of the potential surprise teams. The Rebels endured a three-game losing streak in the middle of their season, but they're currently riding a four-game winning streak. With its 7-3 record, some might say Ole Miss is the underdog, but a win one month ago against then-No. 6 LSU has propelled the Rebels into this week's game.



No. 12 Texas A&M vs. No. 22 LSU
2:30 p.m. CDT, CBS

With a national championship bid completely out of the picture, Texas A&M will need a game like this to enhance its bowl profile. The Aggies have an obvious star in quarterback Johnny Manziel, but a win against the Tigers in Baton Rouge, La., will require solid performances from more than the quarterback spot. The Aggie defense was torched by a 4-6 Mississippi State team last Saturday, and a repeat performance won't do the folks from College Station, Texas any favors.

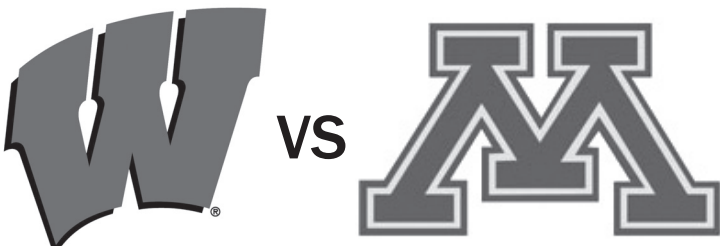
Being ranked outside of the top 15 is not a common situation for the Bayou Bengals. Although all three of their losses have come against ranked teams, the Tigers won't be making any excuses for their season performance thus far. In order to defeat the Aggies, they'll need a steady dose of running back Jeremy Hill. Texas A&M is ranked No. 105 nationally against the run, giving up an average of 210 yards per game.



No. 17 Arizona State vs. No. 14 UCLA
6:00 p.m. CDT, FOX

Beyond Saturday's Big 12 showdown in Stillwater, Okla., this Pac-12 game is arguably one of the nation's biggest. As one of the leagues that decides its champion in a championship game format, this game delivers remarkable importance. Heading into the game, Arizona State is one game ahead of UCLA in the Pac-12 South standings.

Having won their last five games, the Sun Devils are on a tear of late. The performances are largely because of the production of running back Marion Grice. The Sun Devil running game has been dominant this season. It'll be important as they face Anthony Barr and company this Saturday in Pasadena, Calif. UCLA has games against its two biggest division foes remaining. After the home game on Saturday, the Bruins will face its biggest rival in USC. They can't turn their attention away too quickly though, because Arizona State is far from a pushover.



No. 19 Wisconsin vs. No. 25 Minnesota
2:30 p.m. CDT, ESPN

When Brett Bielema left for Arkansas, the Badgers were at a standstill. They brought in Utah State coach Gary Andersen, leaving some to wonder if he could continue Wisconsin's conference dominance. The Badgers have only lost to conference leader Ohio State and they'll need them to lose if they want to climb back into the Big 10 Championship game picture.

Along with Auburn, Minnesota has quickly become one of the nation's greatest success stories. Under coach Jerry Kill, the Golden Gophers have made remarkable improvements this season. The running game has been of greatest assistance for the program. The unit ranks 20th nationally, but will face its greatest test this weekend. Wisconsin's stout run defense ranks seventh nationally, giving up an average of under 100 yards per game.



No. 11 South Carolina vs. Coastal Carolina
12:00 p.m. CDT, ESPN3

South Carolina is in need of a Missouri loss if it wants to creep into the SEC Championship game. With two ranked teams on Missouri's schedule, the chances are there, but Steve Spurrier and the Gamecocks will need to take care of business first. South Carolina's win against Missouri three weeks ago continues to look extremely valuable as they are only one game behind the Tigers. Look for running back Mike Davis to have yet another explosive game as they prepare for their season finale against in-state rival Clemson next week.

In the mean time, the Gamecocks face Coastal Carolina in a late season non-conference game. The Chanticleers are 10-1 this season, but they haven't faced a program even remotely close to the Division I or FBS level.

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By the numbers: K-State could end 17-year home drought

Kiersten Schorgl
staff writer

1
The number of wins OU head coach, Bob Stoops needs to set the record for most coaching victories at Oklahoma.

A win in Manhattan would move Stoops past Sooner legend Barry Switzer as the all-time winningest coach of the storied Oklahoma program. Stoops is also just three Big 12 wins away from joining former Nebraska coach Tom Osborne, Switzer, and K-State head coach Bill Snyder as one of four coaches to reach 100 career Big 8/ Big 12 wins.

5
Consecutive victories by Oklahoma over K-State before last season.

Last season K-State defeated the Sooners 24-19 in Norman, Okla. Before last season, the Wildcats had not come out victorious against Oklahoma since 2003, losing five straight against the Sooners. The last time Bill Snyder's squad upended the Sooners in Manhattan was 1996. A loss this weekend would be head coach Bob Stoops' first loss in Manhattan.

7
The number of years Stoops worked under Bill Snyder.

Hired as an assistant in 1989, Stoops was named co-defensive coordinator in 1991

and assistant head coach and co-defensive coordinator in 1995. During his time with K-State, Stoops played a key role in the turnaround of the K-State program. He helped turnaround what was considered the worst program in major college football. His role in the turnaround was evident in his last four seasons at K-State, where K-State held a record of 35-12 with 3 bowl game appearances.

17
Oklahoma's rank in the FBS in rushing offense.

Oklahoma ranks 17th in the country in rushing offense, averaging 236.4 yards per game. Under Stoops, the Sooners are 61-1 when eclipsing the 200 yard mark on the ground. Oklahoma will be without senior running back Damien Williams on Saturday, but Oklahoma has other options. Senior Brennan Clay is capable of carrying the load for Stoops' team. This season, Clay leads the Sooners with a team-best 643 yards rushing with an average of 6.2 yards per carry.

39.5
The amount of points K-State is averaging during their current win streak.

Last weekend, K-State defeated TCU 33-31 to push their win streak to four-straight games. The Wildcats look to become the first Big 12 team to win out after an 0-3 start to conference play. K-State's offense has been clicking during the current winning streak, averaging 39.5 points per game. K-State hit a season high 49 points two weeks ago against Texas Tech.



Jed Barker | Collegian
Junior wide receiver **Curry Sexton** slaps sophomore quarterback **Daniel Sams**' helmet after Sams ran the ball in for a touchdown against TCU at Bill Snyder Family Stadium last Saturday.

Big 12 predictions: Cowboys win could spoil Bears national title aspirations

Emilio Rivera
staff writer



Kansas Jayhawks vs. Iowa State Cyclones
7 p.m. CDT, Fox Sports 1

The Iowa State Cyclones have shown at times this season that they can compete with any team. The Cyclones (1-9, 0-7 Big 12) only problem is that it can't build momentum game to game, as they keep sustaining major losses. Last week they were trampled by then-No. 18 Oklahoma 48-10.

The Cyclones' issue is that for a team that holds the ball for over 30 minutes per game, they can't seem to get anything going. They manage only 327.9 yards and 21.2 points per game, very low stats compared to the many high-caliber offenses in the Big 12.

The Jayhawks (3-7, 1-7 Big 12) want to keep their momentum going after their first Big 12 win in over three years last week against West Virginia. The Jayhawks previous Big 12 win came over current Pac-12 member Colorado on

Nov. 6, 2010.

Senior running back James Sims had a career day against the Mountaineers with 211 rushing yards. Sims has rushed for over 100-yards 14 times in his career, and is a danger to any defense he faces.

Look for the steadily improving rushing game of the Jayhawks to wear down the Cyclone defense, while the Cyclones try to force too many throws into the Jayhawks secondary.

Prediction: Kansas 35, Iowa State 28



Baylor Bears vs. Oklahoma State Cowboys
7 p.m. CDT, ABC

In what could be the game of the weekend, the Baylor Bears travel to a hostile environment in Boone Pickens Stadium to take on the Oklahoma State Cowboys. This game has the makings of a classic, with the hopes of a national championship possibly hanging in the balance for Baylor, and the Fiesta Bowl looming for both teams.

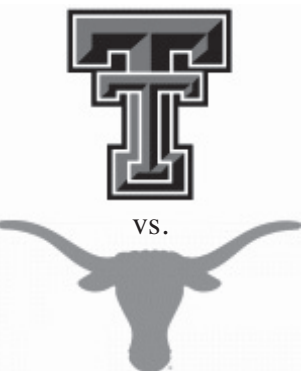
At a perfect 9-0 mark the

undefeated Bears (6-0 Big 12) seem to be building momentum to make a run at Pasadena, Calif, host of this season's BCS National Championship game. In order to do that, the Bears will have to take on a well-oiled machine in the Cowboys (9-1, 6-1 Big 12). After a shocking loss in their Big 12 opener to West Virginia, the Cowboys seem to be out for vengeance. They have won their last six games by an average of 21.3 points.

Both teams' quarterbacks are a threat on any play. Bears junior quarterback Bryce Petty leads the Big 12 with 2,992 passing yards, and has many threats out-wide around him.

Cowboys' senior quarterback Clint Chelf is a dual threat quarterback, and with 1,222 yards on the season he has proven that he can make plays with his arm. But it is his feet that make him dangerous. With 325 yards rushing, Chelf has escapability.

Look for a shoot-out in Stillwater, Okla., with both two of the best offenses in the country going score-for-score. Both teams have top-10 turnover defenses and have the potential to create turnovers on any play. The team with the most mistakes will get overpowered early in the game.



Prediction: Oklahoma State 45, Baylor 42

Thanksgiving Day Special:

Texas Tech vs. Texas Longhorns
7:30 p.m. Nov. 28, Fox Sports 1

In the sixth year of the series, the Texas Longhorns play its annual Thanksgiving Day game against the Texas Tech Red Raiders in the battle for the Chancellor's Spurs. In a series where the Longhorns (7-3, 6-1 Big 12) leads 13-4 —

Texas leads 47-15 all time — the Red Raiders (7-4, 4-4 Big 12) are hoping to break the Longhorns series streak of four games in a row while at the same time stopping their current four-game slide this season.

These teams' seasons have been contrasting, with the Longhorns struggling early but on a role in Big 12 play. The Red Raiders on the other hand, were ranked No. 10 in the country during week 10 before falling to Oklahoma and starting their current losing streak.

The Longhorns, who are

coming off of a loss against Oklahoma State last week, are an average team. Last week, the Cowboys forced senior Case McCoy to make mental errors and throw three interceptions en route to his worst game of the season.

After four straight losses that put the Red Raiders in dire need for a win in their regular season finale, they are not in a good position. After four hard-fought losses to top Big 12 teams, they now face one of the hottest teams in the Big 12.

Prediction: Texas 38 Texas Tech 31

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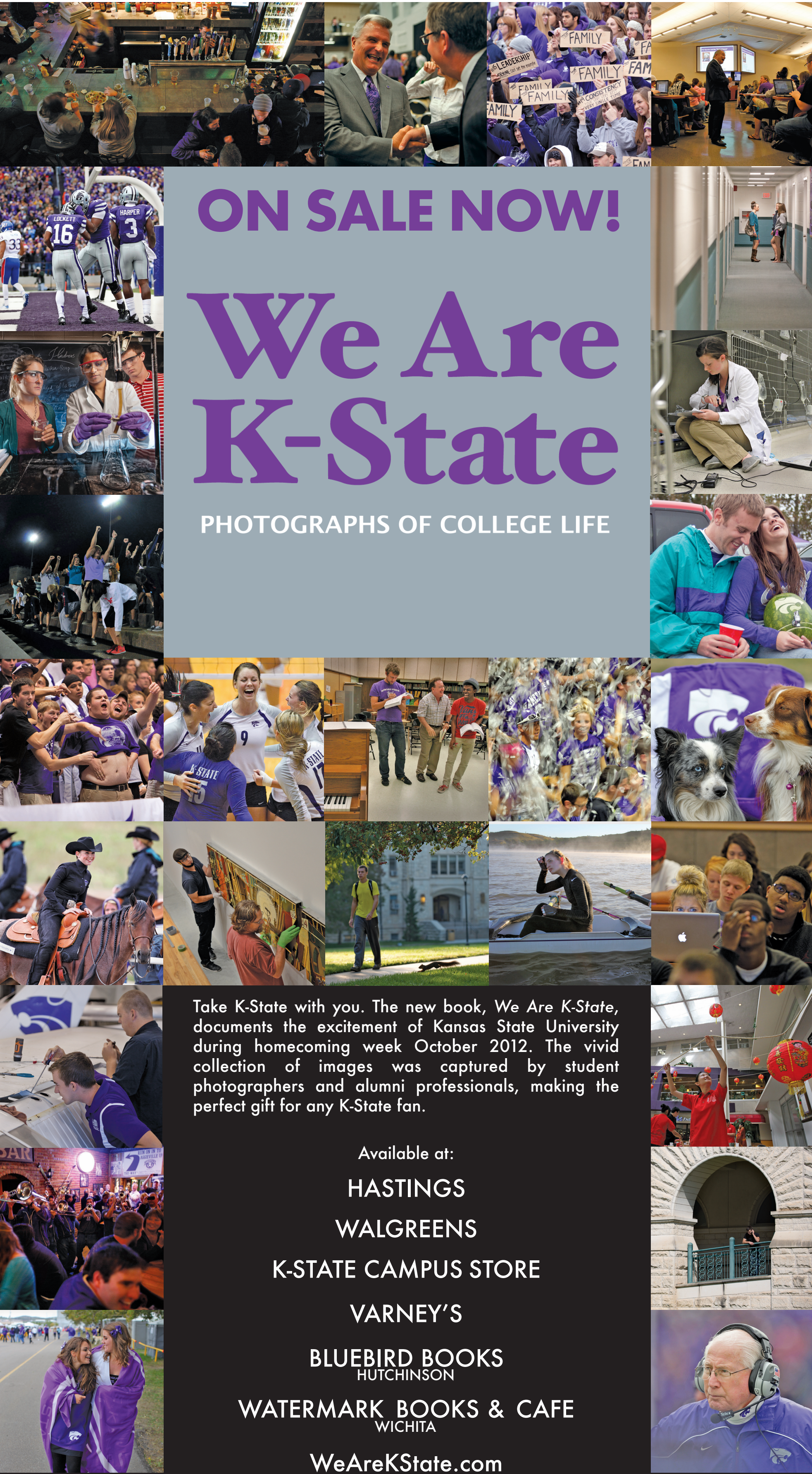
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